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Watershed Protection: A Statewide Approach
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Foreword, Acknowledgements

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Foreword

The Watershed Protection Approach (WPA) is a departure from the way the EPA has traditionally operated its water quality programs and how federal, tribal, and state governments have typically approached natural resource management. Resource management programs -- programs for wetlands protection, wastewater discharge permitting, flood control, farmer assistance, drinking water supply, fish and game management, and recreation -- have tended to operate as individual entities and occasionally at cross purposes.

We now generally recognize that the critical environmental issues facing society are so intertwined that a comprehensive, ecosystem-based approach is required. We also recognize that solving environmental problems depends increasingly on local governments and local citizens. Thus, the need to integrate across traditional program areas (e.g., flood control, wastewater, land use) and across levels of government (federal, state, tribal, local) is leading natural resource management toward a watershed approach.

One emerging framework for a statewide Watershed Protection Approach focuses on organizing and managing by a state's major watersheds, which are called basins in this document. In this statewide approach, activities such as water quality monitoring, planning and permitting are coordinated on a set schedule within large watersheds or basins. Involvement of other natural resource agencies is actively sought to achieve water quality and ecosystem goals.

This document is one of two guides to watershed protection designed for state water quality managers. A second guide, *Watershed Protection: A Project Focus*, describes another aspect of the Watershed Protection Approach -- developing projects for the individual watershed. It provides a blueprint for designing and implementing watershed projects, including references and case studies.

I trust this Watershed Protection Approach document will provide a useful guide for state water quality managers and others involved in watershed-based activities as they adopt, implement and evaluate watershed protection programs.

Robert H. Wayland, III, Director

Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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